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PASTORAL LETTER OF His Grace the Archbishop of Quebec, PRESCRIBING PUBLIC PRAYERS

FOR THE PURPOSE OF DRAWING DOWN THE BLESSINGS OF HEAVEN
ON THE ALLIED ARMIES OF FRANCE AND ENGLAND.



PETER FLAVIANUS TURGEON,

In the Mercy of God and the Grace of the Holy Apostolic See, Archbishop
of Quebec, &c.

*To the Secular and Regular Clergy, and to all the Faithful in our Diocese,
Greeting and Benediction in the Lord.*

FOR a long time past, D. B. B., alarms and rumours of war have been resounding, occasioning deep and general feelings of anxiety and disquiet, not only throughout the old world, but even here, on this continent. The Emperor of Russia, following up his hitherto unchecked career of invasion and aggrandizement, seemed at length to have determined on marching his armed legions against a neighbouring power, whose fair and fertile provinces he coveted. And truly, the Czar, when once master of Constantinople, and settled in the heart of the Turkish Empire, would then see the whole Eastern world prostrate at his feet; he would then be enabled to carry out his long cherished project of uprooting the Catholic Religion in that part of the

world, and of setting up in its stead the miserable schism of the Greek Church. He would then meet with no obstacle in the way of shutting up to Catholics all access to those time-honoured and hallowed spots, which, above all others, they revere,—the sacred grotto of Bethlehem and the holy sepulchre, where, after the sacrifice of Calvary, reposed the body of our blessed Saviour. And it is especially a remarkable fact, that the question of the Holy Places has furnished this prince with a pretext for waging an unjust war against Turkey, whose sole offence and crime, in his eyes, is the positive refusal to despoil countries united with the Roman See, of vested rights and privileges consecrated by the faith of treaties and by long possession.

The long-threatening storm has at length burst over Turkey. The Russian troops in serried ranks and formidable array advance to invade the Ottoman Empire. Turkey, unable alone to resist the overwhelming forces, marshalled against her empire, appeals to the honour and loyalty of France and England. These two powers have nobly responded to the voice of the oppressed, and, even now, their combined armies and fleets advance to the rescue of their ally. The shock and conflict between the contending parties must be fierce and appalling. On the one side, stands the huge colossus of the North, who for years has been garnering up his resources, training and disciplining his barbarous hordes, increasing his military stores and martial appliances, with the view of seizing on the proper time and favourable opportunity for crushing under his iron heel the Turkish Empire, as he but too well succeeded in crushing Catholic Poland. On the other side are two nations who lead the way in the peaceful march of civilization, and whose martial exploits on flood and field have proved that they have never quailed nor gave ground in presence of their most formidable opponents.

We cannot be indifferent, D. B. B., to the issue of this war, which will be decisive of the future lot of Europe, and to its high importance on the interests and prosperity of the Christian Church.

As subjects of the British Empire, loyalty calls on us to offer up our fervent desires that success and victory may crown the armies of our Sovereign. As descendants of the sons of France, the sympathies growing out of a common origin, of a conformity in religion and language, must engage our warmest wishes that the country of our forefathers may triumph over external enemies, as it has already triumphed over the enemies of order in its own bosom. How could we fail to call victory down on the flag which so often guided our forefathers on the field of honour?

the Greek Church. He to Catholics all access others, they revere,— especially a remarkable prince with a pretext and crime, in his eyes, Roman See, of vested by long possession. Turkey. The Russian the Ottoman Empire. haled against her em- and. These two powers now, their combined the shock and conflict g. On the one side, been garnering up his increasing his military proper time and favour- Empire, as he but too le are two nations who se martial exploits or gave ground in pre- his war, which will be nce on the interests and

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But it is as Catholics especially that we are to desire, for the combined armies, victory over a monarch, who, in his state, has oppressed Catholicism, has exiled and persecuted the ministers of the Lord, has scourged and starved humble Nuns, for no other alledged crime than their unswerving fidelity to the See of the Prince of the Apostles. If the Emperor of Russia succeed in his plans and projects of conquest, if he could but impose on the Ottoman Empire the same iron despotism under which his subjects groan, then would the Catholic religion in the East, and particularly in the Holy Land, be subjected to the same indignities and vexations, by which she has been assailed during the last twenty-five years, throughout the whole Muscovite Empire. It is then the cause of the Church which has been confided to the armies of France and England, and their success, while defending Turkey against an unjust aggression on the part of her enemy, will at the same time secure to the Church the two-fold advantage of diminishing schismatical influence in the East, and of establishing Catholicism on a more favourable and independent footing.

But our desires and sympathies would be of no avail, did they not engage us to raise up our eyes towards the Lord of Hosts, for the purpose of obtaining his protecting influence over our brethren exposed to the hazards of war, and of drawing down his mercy on the Christian world.

When now the clangor of arms resounds on every side, in spite of all human efforts, directed towards the preservation of a peace which has lasted nigh forty years: when an invisible power urges the nations of the earth to the fields of war convulsed and shaken to its centre by the workings of revolution and infidelity, it is impossible to shut our eyes on the light, and not to descry the dispensations of Providence, who silently orders the causes of great events, and who, from pole to pole, lays on mankind the impress of his omnipotence, and so shapes their actions as to compel them to work out the hidden designs of his wisdom. *She reacheth therefore from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly (Wisd. VIII. 1).*

However while humbly adoring the admirable wisdom of the Most High, who disposes the course of human events for his greater glory, while affectionately kissing the hand of a merciful Father who threatens to chastise the world by the terrible scourge of war, we are not forbidden to move him to clemency by humble and fervent prayers, nor to implore of him that the perfidious designs of an ambitious despot may be overthrown.

Penetrated with sentiments of the liveliest confidence in His mercy, D. B. B., we shall suppliantly beg of Him, that He will disperse the lowering clouds of calamity

hovering over us, that He will preserve the field of the father of the family from the cruel inroads of the enemy, that He will check the ruthless attempts of a haughty power, which threatens the liberties of the Church and the peace of Christendom. We will conjure Him to spare and preserve the combined armies of our gracious Sovereign and of her allies now going forth to combat in behalf of justice, to grant them a speedy and thorough victory, to the end that under renewed peace and serenity, our hearts being entirely subject to His Divine will, we altogether may be enabled to praise, love and gratefully bless His infinite mercies. *Ut et corda nostra mandatis tuis dedita, et hostium sablatā formidine, tempora sint tūd protectione tranquilla (Oratio pro pace).*

WHEREFORE, having called on the holy name of God, we have prescribed and hereby do prescribe what follows :

1o. From the day of the publication of the present Pastoral Letter up to the last Sunday in July inclusively, on each Sunday and Holiday of obligation, at the close of the Morning Service, five *Paters* and five *Aves* are to be offered up in all our parochial, conventional and non-parochial churches where public service is performed, to implore the protection of heaven in behalf of the allied forces of England and France engaged in war against Russia.

2o. In the mean time every priest will add to the usual prayers at daily mass, the prayer *Pro tempore belli*, in conformity with the Rubrics of the Missal.

3o. At all the benedictions of the Blessed Sacrament, on the above-mentioned days, at the conclusion of the afternoon office, the anthem, verse and prayer *Pro pace*, are to be sung.

This our present Pastoral Letter is to be read and published at the Prone of the parochial masses in all the churches of this diocese and in chapter in all conventional houses, the first Sunday after its reception.

Given at Quebec, under our hand and seal, and the countersignature of our Secretary, this eleventh day of May, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

+ P. F. ARCHBISHOP OF QUEBEC.

By order of His Grace,

EDMOND LANGEVIN, PRST.,
Secretary.



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SSHOP OF QUEBEC.

His Grace,

o LANGEVIN, PRST.,
Secretary.